

Appl. No. : 10/797,211
Filed : March 10, 2004

REMARKS

Applicant again thanks Examiner Guidotti for examining the application and for her time during the interview on December 4th. Claims 24, 28 and 43 are amended as set forth above. As discussed during the interview, the amended claims are supported by the application and drawings as filed. In particular, the amendment to Claim 43 is supported, for example, by Figures 12, 13, 14, 16, 18, and 19, which show several devices that include non-intersecting grooves. Thus, no new matter has been added.

Upon entry of the amended claims, Claims 21-35 and 37-47 are pending with Claim 36 withdrawn, but potentially subject to rejoinder. The specific rejections are discussed in more detail below.

Discussion of Claim Objections

The Examiner objected to Claim 24, inquiring whether the comma at the end of the claim was meant to be a period. In fact, the comma was a typographical error. The Claim has been amended to replace the comma with a period, thereby obviating the objection.

Discussion of Claim Rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 112, 2nd Paragraph - Indefiniteness

The Examiner rejected Claim 28 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, 2nd paragraph as being indefinite due to the recitation in the claim of “the first cleaning device.” The Examiner noted the lack of antecedent basis for the limitation. Applicant has amended Claim 28 to remove the word “first” in order to have proper antecedent basis in the claim from which Claim 28 depends. In view of the amendment, Applicant request reconsideration and withdrawal of the indefiniteness rejection.

Discussion of Claim Rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) - Anticipation

The Examiner rejected Claims 21, 24, 26-29, 31, 33-34, 38, 40, 42-44 and 46 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 3,188,675 (“Beck”).

The instant § 102(b) rejection was discussed during the December 4th interview. The vast differences between the cited art and the claimed subject matter were discussed. Specifically, as discussed during the interview, Beck discloses a device having a non- or discontinuous surface, since the surface of Beck is interrupted by perpendicular channels.

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Therefore, it was agreed during the December 4th interview that independent Claim 21 is not anticipated by Beck due to reciting, *inter alia*, “continuous ridges that circumscribe each of said four faces.” Such ridges or surfaces are not disclosed by Beck.

Independent Claim 43 has been amended to recite “continuous, non-intersecting grooves that circumscribe each of said four faces.” Beck does not anticipate, for among other reasons, because it fails to disclose a device with continuous and non-intersecting grooves. Again, Beck discloses a device, very different from the claimed subject matter, which has perpendicular channels.

Thus, Beck fails to disclose all of the features of the two independent claims. Therefore, Beck does not anticipate the independent claims or any claim depending therefrom. Reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection under § 102(b) is respectfully requested.

Discussion of Claim Rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) - Obviousness

The Examiner rejected Claims 21, 24, 26-29, 31-35, 37-39 and 42-45 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,663,309 (“Zamansky et al.”) in view of U.S. Patent Publication No. US 2001/0029967 (“McDonough”). The Examiner rejected Claim 22 as being obvious over Zamansky et al. and McDonough, further in view of U.S Patent No. 4,690,125 (“Beller”). The Examiner also rejected Claim 23 as being obvious over Zamansky et al. and McDonough, further in view of U.S. Patent No. 3,146,479 (“Stoker”). Furthermore, the Examiner rejected Claims 25 and 30 as being obvious over Zamansky et al. and McDonough, further in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,916,382 (“Aldredge”). Finally, the Examiner rejected Claims 32, 35, 37, 39, 41, 45 and 47 as being obvious over Beck in view of McDonough.

As discussed during the December 4th interview, Applicant submits that the claimed subject matter is not obvious over any of the art of record, alone or in combination. The prior art of record is strikingly different from the claimed subject matter, even if combined. The references alone, or even if combined, fail to disclose, teach or make obvious every feature of the claimed devices. Therefore, there is no *prima facie* obviousness.

For example, as agreed during the interview, Zamansky et al. disclose a cylindrical device lacking the features, such as the faces, as recited in the independent claims. Even if the circular device of Zamansky were to be combined with the devices of McDonough, such devices would still be far different from the claimed devices. It is also worth noting that the devices of

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Zamansky and McDonough are very different (e.g., cylindrical/circular v. cubical/rectangular), and it is hard to imagine their combination. The addition of the Beller, Stoker, or Aldredge references still would not result in *prima facie* obviousness. Therefore, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of the claims in view of Zamansky and McDonough is respectfully requested.

Also, as discussed during the interview, dependent Claims 32, 35, 37, 39, 41, 45 and 47 are not obvious over Beck combined with McDonough. This rejection will not be further discussed due to the lack of *prima facie* obviousness of the independent claims from which Claims 32, 35, 37, 39, 41, 45 and 47 depend. Thus, withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

In sum, the references alone or combined fail to obviate the claims. Further, as illustrated and discussed during the interview held on December 4, 2007, the claimed devices provide many surprising advantages, none of which are present in the cited references alone or when combined.

Therefore, Applicant respectfully submits that the claims are not obvious over the claimed references. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection under § 103(a) is respectfully requested.

Conclusion

The undersigned has made a good faith effort to respond to the Office Action. Nevertheless, if any undeveloped issues remain or if any issues require clarification, the Examiner is invited to call the undersigned attorney to resolve such issues promptly.

Please charge any additional fees, including any fees for additional extension of time, or credit overpayment to Deposit Account No. 11-1410.

Respectfully submitted,

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